



# THE NATIONAL ERA.

WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY 11, 1847.

## CORRESPONDENTS.

We have been favored with many valuable communications, which will appear at as early a moment as possible.

## GREAT SPEECH OF MR. WEBSTER.

We present our readers with the first and only report of Mr. Webster's great speech in the Lexington case which has been made public. It will be read with profound interest by our professed friends.

## PROTEST AND REMONSTRANCE.

We would direct attention to the "Protest and Remonstrance" published on our fourth page. It is written in an excellent spirit; and, before our Southern readers condemn it, let them recollect that the authors of it are only acting upon the same principles which have long distinguished the Society of Friends, to whose course in regard to slavery they take no exception.

## MR. OWEN ON SLAVERY.

On the fourth page will be found a short article by Mr. Owen, on Slavery. The reader must understand that we do not hold ourselves responsible for the opinions of our correspondents, unless we endorse them. The Era is a Free Discussion paper.

## CROWDED.

We are unable to present the reader, this week, with our usual variety. Many selected articles of great interest have been crowded out.

## PROCEEDINGS OF CONVENTION.

We intend to notice the reports of the proceedings of the Convention in Maine, Rhode Island, New York, and Northern Ohio, next week.

## COLONEL CILLEY.

A reported report of the remarks of Col. Cilley, in support of his resolution, was designed for publication in this number, but it is unavoidably laid over one week.

## LIBERTY ADVOCATE.

In noticing last week the *Liberty Advocate*, published in Worcester, Rhode Island, the printed mode in which it was devoted to the Democratic cause. So it is, but not in the technical signification. It is a *Liberty paper*.

## CONGRESS—THE GREAT QUESTION.

Attendance on the debates in Congress has occupied a large portion of our time during the last week, as the report of these debates occupies a large space in the paper. But we could not excuse ourselves to our readers were we to fail in reporting fully the proceedings on the Great Question now under discussion. For a view of the present state of this question, see our report

## NEW YORK CONVENTION.

We are under great obligation to Dr. J. P. Stony, one of the founders of the New York State Library, for a manuscript copy of the proceedings and resolutions of the meeting. The inserted state of our columns prevents our publishing them this week. We shall find room for them next.

## PRIVATE LETTERS.

Private letters assure us that it was a splendid affair.

## YOUNG AMERICA—REFORM—WAGES SLAVERY, &c.

"Young America" of the Era, proceeds to examine at length its position in relation to slavery. It says that the design of the paper is to abolish *chattel slavery* by substituting *wages slavery*; that this "one idea" is but *half* an idea; and that the change of *chattel slavery* for *wages slavery*, which is growing to be an intolerable burden, is an *over-weight*.

The want of a recognition of man's right to the use of the earth as an essential to freedom, has caused abolitionists, heretofore, to alvocate the abolition of *chattel slavery* but argued, based on *family* and *property* rights, that the *one idea* of that "peculiar institution" an advantage in upholding it. For instance: abolitionists have said, "we will buy out the slaves, and then let them compete with each other for wages, and get more work from them at less cost; but the pride of domineering the fact that the slaves might escape to the North, and then we would have to pay for their wives, and other considerations, have prevented the abolitionists, who have been able to return to the *one idea* of *chattel slavery*, with that of *handless hirelings*, and by showing that hirelings were more likely to revolt again their taskmasters."

Some abolitionists, who are beginning to have a correct view of the matter, still maintain that to abolish *chattel slavery* is the proper first step towards freedom. But, their arguments are refuted by those over whom they preside. They would do more work as hirelings than as slaves, and consequently diminish the market price of labor. It can be found, however, in the process of inuring the slaves to *wages slavery*, that it is practicable and effectual first step towards the abolition of *slavery*, of every kind, than to limit the individual acquisition of slaves, or to make a market for the slaves of one family, and so on. For a view of a new anti-slavery paper at the seat of Government, where of all places it was most needed, ought to have been prepared to occupy the true advanced position."

The true advanced position; if we understand the editor, is presented in his "Issue for 1847—Land Limitation, Inalienable Homestead, and Freedom of the Public Lands."

We shall take this occasion to suggest some general views in relation to reform, as well as to point out what, in our opinion, is a serious error in the creed of the advocates of Land Reform. They consider *land* as *soil*, with which we are to provide. We look upon *land* as *machinery*, laborers, and *machines*. Labor ought to command more respect, and a better compensation. We should rejoice were the labor to gain as much by the power of machinery as does the capitalist. Right measures, wisely directed, for the protection of labor against the oppressive impositions of capital, will always command our support. It is vitally important that Government do all it can, legitimately, to prevent oppressive land monopolies, multiplying landholders, and sending the laborers to the *bottom of the hole*.

That there are serious evils arising from the absorption, by a few property holders, of large landed estates, from the influence of enormous wealth, and the too great dependence of the laborer; and that labor-saving machinery has generally added more to the power of the employer than employed, few will deny. Now, as it was in the days of Solomon, the rich man's wealth is his strong tower, and the destruction of the poor is his poverty.

But, to what extent can these evils be remedied? While our faith in the progress of humanity is immovable, we do not look for a millennium in the present order of things. So long as man shall be born of woman, there will be suffering, physical and moral, social and personal, because there will be ignorance and crime, accidents and vicissitudes of circumstances and seasons. And there will always be inequalities of wealth, intelligence, and influence, because minds will always differ in intelligence and power.

The earth is the school, and the home of the human race. He who can not make the best use of his school, is not fit to be a teacher. Our reformers eschew such a policy; he holds it, as far from him to sanction any such worldly wisdom.

The course of the Apostles is still pleasing to him. He distinctly avers the dedication, that "all we have of this spirit are God's gifts."

He says, "I charge the Almighty to bear witness against me, if I have not earnestly endeavored to convert all to the truth."

That was a tame policy, very different from his bold and energetic course of action.

He imagines that the spirit of reform in this century is far more exalted than it was during the first period of the Christian Era. The character of Christ he admires in many respects; but detects in his course occasional indications of worldly prudence, and a spirit of compromise; and his precepts, he thinks, are not always in harmony with a sound philosophy. For example, it was a sorrowful spectacle, when the great Teacher, being required to pay tribute, wrought a miracle, and thus avoided payment of a poll tax, and so escaped the payment of a sum which he was asked whether it was lawful to pay tribute to Cesar! Why did he evade the question? Why did he shrink from uttering his real sentiments in regard to Caesar's Government? But this is not all. Christ insisted that it was expedient to consult the popular will, and to submit to it, in order to avoid a civil war.

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